

## Rep. Nunes testifies on transportation needs of district

In a campaign to get more federal transportation dollars for the Central Valley, Rep. Devin Nunes told the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in early April that roads in the world's most prolific agricultural region are disintegrating.

"For too long, taxpayers in California have donated money to transportation and infrastructure projects in other regions of the country," Mr. Nunes said during his testimony. "I believe that the time has come for California to reclaim some of the money that we lose on an annual basis to the federal government."

In fact, last year California taxpayers contributed \$46.9 billion dollars to the federal government - all of which was given to other states and not returned to local taxpayers.

"While all of these infrastructure improvement projects are important to my congressional district, the future of the San Joaquin Valley primarily rests on the health of State Route 99," he said. "This highway serves as the primary north/south transportation corridor for California's farm to market industry and functions as the single highway link connecting expanding Valley population centers between

Kern and Sutter Counties."

According to the state Department of Transportation, more than 46,000 vehicles pass along the four north/south lanes in Tulare County every day. That traffic volume is comparable to other stretches of 99 where there are six lanes.

The funding requested under TEA-21, Mr. Nunes said, will guarantee that 24 miles of the corridor are widened and the economic stability and physical health of the San Joaquin Valley will be secured for years to come.

The road conditions are more than a traffic hazard; they cause congestion and

contribute to the area's poor air quality. Some of the projects he emphasized included:

- \$6.2 and \$5 million for the City of Visalia to improve the Ben Maddox Bridge at Highway 198 and a downtown bus maintenance facility, respectively;
- \$60 million for rehabilitation of farm to market roads in Tulare County;
- \$10.7 million for street improvements around California State University at Fresno;
- \$10 million to alleviate traffic congestion on Peach Avenue near the Fresno airport

## ANWR—cont.'d

"We must find new, reliable sources of energy to maintain our economy and bolster our national security."

The energy bill would open the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas leasing, subject to what Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton testified would be **"the most stringent environmental protection requirements ever applied to federal energy production."**

The coastal plain is of particular interest for its massive energy potential, which is estimated to be the largest discovery of oil in the United States.

Mr. Nunes traveled with other members of the Resources Committee to Alaska, where they held a field hearing on the possi-

bility of opening up oil production on the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

"Of the residents who attended the meeting, they all supported opening up the 2,000-acre site to oil and gas leasing," Mr. Nunes said.

The bill also seeks to:

Create new or additional incentives for oil and gas development on federal lands and areas of the outer continental shelf that are not already off-limits to such development;

Increase geothermal power production on federal lands;

And optimize the power production of existing Bureau of Reclamation hydro facilities.



It was 32 degrees below zero when Rep. Devin Nunes reached the city of Kaktovik on Barter Island in Alaska.

**"I expected to see mountains, trees and caribou. For the most part, it's 19 million acres of flat land covered in ice," Mr. Nunes said.**

**The Bush administration is proposing allowing oil and gas production on 2,000 of the 19 million acre refuge.**